

FLATHEAD COUNTY FAIR COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes from January 14, 2021

A regular meeting of the Flathead County Fair Commission was called to order by Chair Sam Nunnally on Thursday, January 14, 2021 at 6:30pm in the 4H Building at the Fairgrounds, 265 N. Meridian Rd, Kalispell.

Roll call of members: Helen Keil, Mark Carlson, Sam Nunnally, Pam Holmquist, and Jessica Treweek were present. Doug Wise attended by telephone.

Staff present: Mark Campbell

Guests present: Sharon Askelson, Inga Lake, Kayla Seaman, Talli Carmalt, Bobbi Corrigan, Marcia Stolfus, Hanna Stolfus, Ella Lund, Michael Lund, Michael Stofus.

Agenda approval: Mark Carlson moved to approve agenda as presented, seconded by Jessica Treweek. All in favor, motion approved.

Past meeting minutes: Previous meeting minutes from November 5th were presented. Jessica Treweek moved for approval of minutes as presented. Seconded by Doug Wise, motion passed.

Public Comment: Sam called for public comment of matters not on the agenda. No public comment was heard. Comment item was closed by Sam.

Election of 2021 Fair Commission officers: Sam called for nominations for Chair position. Doug nominated Sam Nunnally as Chair for the current year. Mark Carlson seconded. No further nominations were made. Question called and all were in favor. Motion passed. Sam asked for nominations of Vice Chair. Mark Carlson nominated Doug Wise. Second by Jessica. No further nominations were made. Question called with all in favor. Motion passed.

Manager's report: Mark shared January updates including minor painting and cleaning. Work is proceeding on conversion of land fill scale booth into a ticket booth for east gate. Grandstand entertainment is lined up but remain in a watch position related to COVID conditions in the community. Event activity remains busy including addition of vaccination clinic held by Health Department.

County budget preparation for FY22 has begun with a due date of March 26th.

Event activity and cancellations was reviewed. A celebration of life for Maverick Bench will be held February 6th in the Trade Center.

RMAF Spring Facility Tour will be held April 6-7th in the Spokane area. Let the office know if interested. We are on a tight budget but could consider.

November and December financial reports were shared with shortfall of revenues and expenses explained. Mark also shared revenue/expense projections through June 30th. A detail of revenues and expenses compared with budget projections were provided with a projected ending balance. Questions remain about the CARES act submission, further under-expenditure, and other changes. Expected presentation of our finance plan to County Commissioners in early March. Doug asked if it is normal

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for the CARES act to reject submissions. Pam stated the County is seeing results all over the board. Fair is also pursuing the potential of support from Shuttered Venue Operators Grant included in the recent relief bill. This is being overseen by the Small Business Administration.

Mark asked for a FY 22 budget workshop to review the details. He asked if March 11th prior to the Board meeting work everybody. All concurred and this will be set for 5 PM.

Correspondence was received from the Middlemist family from Dixon, MT to participate in 2021 Fair as 4H Market lambs. Mark asked Inga Lake to provide background on the family and request. She explained their home fair of Lake County has changed dates creating challenges for the family. Our rules allow participation from Flathead and surrounding 4 Counties that includes Lake. Inga vouches these youngsters would be an asset to the Fair. Mark provided historical background on how the Fair programs have evolved to represent and be open to the entire NW Montana region. Mark shared observations on the growth of the Market Livestock Auction in other areas. Does not feel we are at that point but need to be aware of the future. Helen reviewed the interest from a 4H member of Pondera County the previous year. Local requirements must be met for participation. Sam respects the local businesses who support the youth. Doug advised that we move forward with the rules we have set but work with our sale partners (4H, FFA, Chamber) to establish any future guidelines. Pam recognizes our crowding and resource challenges and encourages work toward establishing long-term procedures needed.

NW Montana Rodeo pageant update as there have been a number of changes taking place. Mark provided background and current situation of two programs wishing to go forward. Kayla Seaman was introduced and gave detail on what has led her and others to establish a new program. The Pro Rodeo pageant has failed to submit needed statements and filings to the State and non-profit status, causing concerns from many. The new program will provide leadership and growth opportunities for area youth. Kayla has structured, created, and filed all appropriate documents. Mark has tried pulling the different programs together to minimize confusion. Past Fair support has been space for programming and growth. Fair will need to continue this support and benefit from ambassadorship provided. Michael Lund explained the charitable non-profit status of the Pro Rodeo Pageant is non-existent, without reports or documents filed. Talli Carmalt introduced herself and former royalty with background information on what has transitioned in the past year. They are 100% behind the new program.

The board and Kayla spoke further on how the relationship between the programs are connected but desire to move forward. Confusion with sponsors and the public remains a primary concern. Board discussion and scenarios were held. Sam asked this be brought back on next months agenda with continued work toward a resolution. The Board thanked everyone for their input and hard work.

Sam and Mark shared the receipt of Sunni Deb Backstrom's 2021 NFR jacket who gifted it to us.

Committee or Director Reports: No committee or member reports were heard.

Unfinished Business: Helen asked if the graduating High School seniors fulfilled their commitment to participate in care and sale of their livestock. Yes, to our knowledge they all returned as agreed upon.

New Business: Sam asked for Board input on the 2021 Fair relating to key elements, layout, etc. He felt the 45-day go/no go was tight and should be extended. Mark reviewed a strategic planning framework to start the discussion. Jessica agrees with keeping traditions and moving forward. Doug agrees the rodeo is a main stay, but entertainment stretches us with a potential for loss. Set dates with January 14, 2021 FB Meeting

key decisions to move forward. Mark suggested mid-March to early April would be date for concert decision. Further discussion about the Wednesday concert with direction to keep it on the board for now. Pam's greater concern is having a carnival again in 2021. North Star Amusements has sent a letter stating they are planning on 2021 events with a limited ride selection. Rodeo is decided and a given. Demo Derby needs to be restructured or changed and this could be the best year. Doug is in favor of developing a new application or event for that day. Keep standards of a quality 2-hour show. Food concessionaires will be contacted to ensure return.


Helen asked for a progress update on use of concession space contracting during non-fair. A draft agreement is being finalized that should provide the controls in best interest of fairgrounds and facility owners.

Additional fair components, competitions, and improvements. This requires engagement by others and in some areas is harder to foster. The Fair needs to come out of the pandemic working on all cylinders and it will.

Adjournment: Jessica moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 pm. Seconded by Helen. All in favor. Motion carried.

Submitted by:

Approved as submitted:


Chair

2-11-2021
Date